

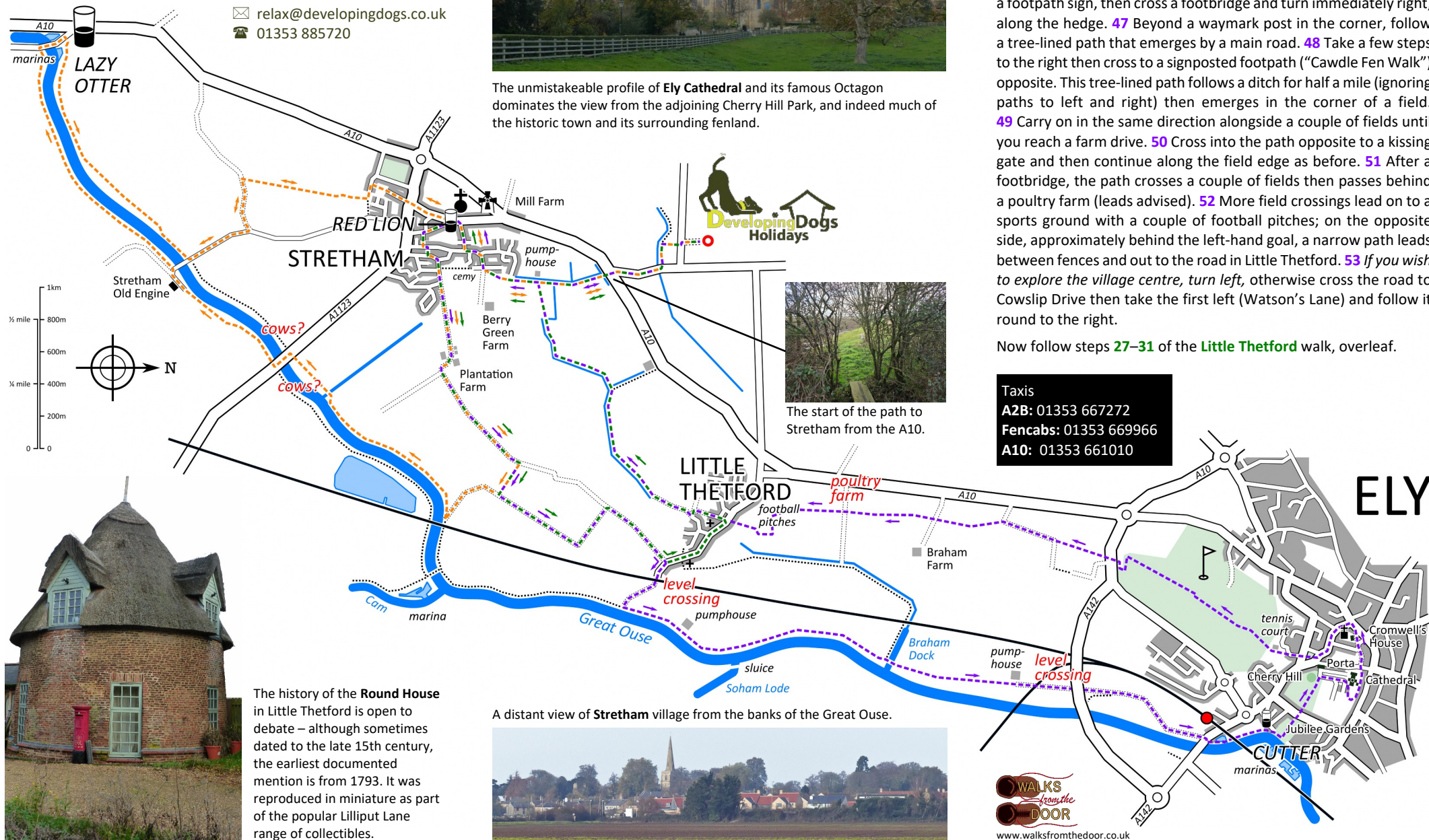
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The unmistakable profile of **Ely Cathedral** and its famous Octagon dominates the view from the adjoining Cherry Hill Park, and indeed much of the historic town and its surrounding fenland.



The history of the **Round House** in Little Thetford is open to debate – although sometimes dated to the late 15th century, the earliest documented mention is from 1793. It was reproduced in miniature as part of the popular Lilliput Lane range of collectibles.



A distant view of **Stretham** village from the banks of the Great Ouse.

...continued from previous page

to the 12th tee. **44** Bear right and follow the path across the course. Follow a ditch and hedge on your right, then go through a gap and cross a footbridge, continuing in the same direction with the hedge now on your left, with overhead power lines as a guide. **45** Pass a footpath sign and waymark and then a bench by the 6th tee. **46** At the end of the course, near a small hut, turn left along a hedge by a footpath sign, then cross a footbridge and turn immediately right, along the hedge. **47** Beyond a waymark post in the corner, follow a tree-lined path that emerges by a main road. **48** Take a few steps to the right then cross to a signposted footpath ("Cawdle Fen Walk") opposite. This tree-lined path follows a ditch for half a mile (ignoring paths to left and right) then emerges in the corner of a field. **49** Carry on in the same direction alongside a couple of fields until you reach a farm drive. **50** Cross into the path opposite to a kissing gate and then continue along the field edge as before. **51** After a footbridge, the path crosses a couple of fields then passes behind a poultry farm (leads advised). **52** More field crossings lead on to a sports ground with a couple of football pitches; on the opposite side, approximately behind the left-hand goal, a narrow path leads between fences and out to the road in Little Thetford. **53** *If you wish to explore the village centre, turn left, otherwise cross the road to Cowslip Drive then take the first left (Watson's Lane) and follow it round to the right.*

Now follow steps **27–31** of the **Little Thetford** walk, overleaf.

Taxis
A2B: 01353 667272
Fencabs: 01353 669966
A10: 01353 661010



three circular walks from



Little Thetford

5¼ miles: Fairly easy

Two villages and atmospheric fenland droves.

The Old Engine and the Lazy Otter

7¼ or 8½ miles: Moderate

Along the Great Ouse to a historic pumphouse and a popular riverside pub.

Ely

11½ miles: Fairly strenuous

A river and fenland walk to the stunning cathedral city.

Little Thetford

5¼ miles: Fairly easy

Allow 3 hours. *The outward section (steps 1–12) describes the quickest off-road route to Stretham (1¼ miles each way), where there is a village shop and the Red Lion pub.*

1 Walk out to the road and turn left. **2** By arrangement with the local farmer, residents can turn right after a few yards and follow a field edge to meet a public footpath by a drain. **3** Turn left and follow the footpath out to the road. **4** Turn right; again by arrangement with the local landowner, residents can walk their dogs along the field edges outside the ditches to either side of the road, subject to farming operations. **5** Cross the busy A10 with care and cross a footbridge indicated by a public footpath sign to the left of the road-sign. **6** Follow a grassy headland between fields with a ditch on your right, bending slightly right after 250 yards. **7** A similar distance beyond this bend, pass a pumphouse on the right (opposite a similar path heading off to the left, which is our return route). **8** Continue beyond the pumphouse, shortly passing the rear of the first houses of Stretham. **9** The path ends at the drive of Berry Green Farm; turn right.

The route as described now visits the centre of Stretham village; for a minor short cut, you can bypass the village by turning left opposite Berry Green and following a footpath that passes a cemetery and rejoins the described route at step 17, where you turn left.

10 For the village centre, continue along Wood Lane to a T-junction. **11** Turn left past the school entrance, then turn right into Top Street. Pass Hazel Court on the right. **12** At the end of the road, turn left along the High Street and walk down to the church, pub, shop and cross. **13** Follow Chapel Street (to the left of the Red Lion) to its junction with Pump Lane, and turn left (left of the red-brick chapel). **14** Beyond the chapel, a tarmac path leads to Read’s Street. **15** Turn left, then turn right almost immediately, down another surfaced path between house numbers 23a and 23b, which leads shortly to Brook Lane. **16** Turn left, then after 100 yards turn right into Plantation Gate. **17** At the end of the houses on the left, pass the end of the cemetery path on your left and continue along the farm drive ahead, passing the end of Kisby Walk and new housing on your right. **18** The concrete track continues across open fields to Plantation Farm, where you pass two houses on the left to a barrier, then bear half-right across the farmyard. **19** Join a track beyond the hard-standing area that curves to the left (ignoring a grassy track off to the right) and then heads out between fields and passes left of a small copse. **20** Follow the track round a shallow left-hand bend then, within sight of an isolated barn, leave the obvious track onto a lesser track on the right which heads across to a row of trees (the track straight on past the barn is more direct but is not a right-of-way). **21** On reaching the line of trees, turn left, with the railway away to your right. **22** When the track bends left, follow it away from the railway (now with trees on your right) to rejoin the track you were following earlier. Turn right towards the houses of Little Thetford.

23 When you reach the road, turn left and walk up through the village. **24** Pass the Baptist Chapel on your right and a thatched cottage on the left at the junction with Green Hill. **25** Continue between the Round House on the right and St George’s Church on the left. **26** Shortly after passing a telephone booth, turn left at a Public Byway sign and join a residential road (Watson’s Lane). **27** At the end of the tarmac, continue ahead along a grassy track between trees until you reach a bungalow. **28** Turn left and then right at a junction onto Burying Way. Beyond the last building, this continues as an unsurfaced drove between hedges, then runs along the left-hand side of two fields with a drain on the left. **29** Beyond a lone tree, the track crosses open fields to a stile and barrier where you cross a drain and continue ahead, ignoring another track off to the right. **30** The track bends left, following the drain on your left until you meet another, where you turn right. **31** This track leads more or less directly to the pumphouse you passed near the beginning of your walk. Turn right to the A10. **31** Cross the main road carefully and retrace your earlier steps back to White Cross Farm, using the off-road alternatives described earlier if you wish.

The Old Engine and the Lazy Otter

7¼ or 8½ miles: Moderate

Allow 4–5 hours. *There may be cattle in the fields in the vicinity of the A1123 Newmarket Road and the Old Engine.*

Shorter route

Follow steps 1–12 of the Little Thetford walk, above, as far as the centre of Stretham.

13 Continue down the High Street, to the right of the Red Lion, until you reach the end. **14** Cross into Cage Lane and walk down to the end. **15** Continue along the alleyway at the end until you meet another road (Fieldside), where you turn left. **16** At the end of the road, continue along the narrow path to the right of Willow Lodge. **17** Just before a footbridge, turn right at a Wakefields Way signpost. **18** Follow the path between gardens and then along the edge of a series of fields separated by gates and footbridges. **19** When, after a final footbridge, you meet a track, turn left and follow it out to a road (Green End). **20** Turn right and walk down the lane to the River Great Ouse. **21** Cross the bridge and turn right. *Now join the Longer route at step 28.*

Longer route

Follow steps 1–20 of the Little Thetford walk, above.

21 On reaching the line of trees, turn right and follow the track as it curves left to the railway bridge over the Great Ouse. **22** Climb to a gate and turn right along the embankment, with the river on your left. **23** Climb a stile by a gate and continue along the bank; the embankment runs a little way away from the river and leads to a footbridge over a drain with gates either side. **24** Beyond the bridge there may be cattle in the fields. Continue with care along the bank and pass a small

pumphouse before you reach a stile onto the A1123 Newmarket Road. **25** There are paths either side of the river beyond the main road to the next bridge, and again there may be livestock in the riverside fields. You may prefer to make your choice depending on their presence, but the described route uses the southern bank: turn left along the main road across the river, then turn right through a metal kissing gate. **26** The path runs along the embankment to Stretham Old Engine, with the river now on your right. **27** Drop down onto the road and walk past the museum to a bridge. *At this point, if you are not visiting the Lazy Otter, you can shorten your walk by a little over 2 miles by crossing the bridge and jumping to step 33.* **28** Follow the southern embankment of the river past a solar farm. **29** After about a mile, you reach a road just off the A10; turn right and cross the river to the Lazy Otter. **30** Suitably refreshed, take a path that leaves the garden at the rear of the pub and runs between the holiday lodges on the left and the river and marina on the right. **31** A mile further along, you will find yourself back at the bridge near the Old Engine; turn left, away from the river. **32** Turn left along the lane (Green End). **33** Follow the lane for 500 yards then, at a bend, take a signposted track on the left (FP12 Middle Common Drove). **34** After 350 yards, turn right over a footbridge and through a hedge onto a footpath (signposted FP20 Wakefields Way). **35** This path runs along the edge of a series of fields with a ditch on the right, passing a number of gates and footbridges. **36** On the edge of Stretham village it runs between garden fences to a path junction by a dog bin and footbridge; turn left. **37** You emerge into a residential road (Fieldside); follow the road for a short distance then turn right along a narrow signposted path between houses. **38** This leads to the end of Cage Lane. Follow the road out to the A1123. **39** Cross into the High Street and walk up the road, passing the church on the left and cross, shop, and pub on the right. **40** Turn right into Top Street then, at the end of the road, turn left. **41** Just beyond the primary school entrance on your left, follow the road round to the right. **42** After the last house on the left (Berry Green), turn left onto a public footpath signposted to Little Thetford and Ely. **43** Follow it along the back of the gardens then across a field to a pumphouse. **44** Ignoring the path to the right, continue ahead to the A10. **45** Cross the road carefully and retrace your steps to White Cross Farm.



Ely

11½ miles: Fairly strenuous

Allow 5–6 hours plus sightseeing time in Ely. There are a couple of main roads and railways to cross and the streets of Ely may be crowded. Encounters with livestock are possible but unlikely.

Follow steps 1–22 of the Little Thetford walk, as far as the road in Little Thetford.

23 Turn right along the road and cross the railway with care. **24** Follow the track half-right, which leads shortly to the River Great Ouse. **25** Go through a gate and climb the steps to a kissing gate on the top of the embankment; turn left. **26** Shortly, pass a pumping station on the left and continue along the river, then pass the sluice at the bottom of Soham Lode on the opposite bank. **27** After a further half-mile, cross the footbridge over Braham Dock. **28** Half a mile further on, join a track to a pumping station and cross the railway at a level crossing. **29** The track continues beyond the railway and passes below the Ely Southern Bypass bridge (ignoring the new walkway on the right). **30** After a further half-mile (walking either along the top of the embankment or the adjoining surfaced track) you reach the A142. **31** Cross and take a few steps to the right before resuming your way along the riverside via a path on your left. **32** Pass a dock on the left then go under the railway and continue to the Cutter Inn. **33** Beyond the pub, leave the river and walk along the left-hand side of Jubilee Gardens, passing to the left of the covered bandstand. **34** At the end of the park, cross at the lights and turn left through a gateway. Pass a children’s playground on the left and continue up the surfaced path with fine views of Ely Cathedral to your right. Pass the wooded Cherry Hill (a Norman motte) on the left and continue to the Ely Porta, a late medieval gatehouse housing the Bishop’s Courthouse and Prison. **35** Turn right and walk up the road to the Cathedral, passing to the right of the Prior’s House and Chapel in a walled garden. **36** Pass the end of Firmary Lane and turn right, close to the cathedral walls, and follow the path between the Almonry Gardens (right) and the west end of the cathedral. **37** For the town centre, go through the Sacrist’s Gate, otherwise keep left around the northern side of the cathedral building. **38** Cross the road by the Conference Centre and pass the bollards to walk across Palace Green with the cathedral behind you. **39** At the end of the Green, pass the Tudor St Mary’s Cottage on the corner of Church Lane and a parking area, then bear left to Oliver Cromwell’s House. **40** Pass a bus stop and continue along St Mary’s Street past Parson’s Almshouses on the left. **41** Turn left into Silver Street and follow it to the end, at the other side of the Porta. **42** Turn right across a green area (Barton Square) past some benches and cross into a one-way street with a footpath sign on the left. At a parking area, turn left onto a tree-lined path past a house and tennis courts. **43** When the main path bends right, walk straight on across the grass. At the end of the grass you meet a path by a hedge, where you turn left to a waymarked post close

continued overleaf...